

THE NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY: DISARMAMENT PILLAR



“Peace with justice means pursuing the security of a world without nuclear weapons.”

– President Barack Obama

DISARMAMENT

The 1970 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the cornerstone of the nonproliferation regime and the basis for international cooperation to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons.

For nearly half a century, the three mutually reinforcing “pillars” of the treaty — nuclear nonproliferation, disarmament, and the peaceful use of nuclear energy — have provided a strong foundation for cooperation to reduce global nuclear dangers and contributed profoundly to international security.

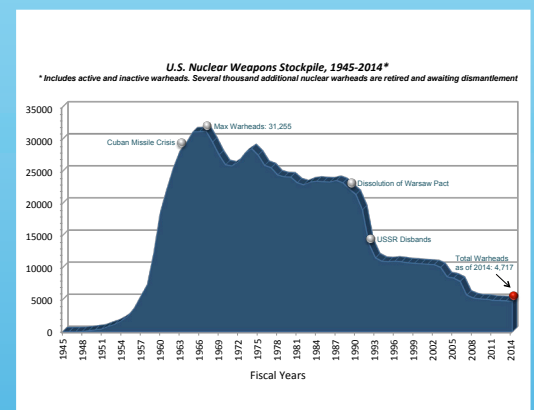
The United States is committed to seeking the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons. Since the NPT entered into force, the United States has made significant progress towards disarmament — actively reducing the total U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile and limiting the role of nuclear weapons.

PROGRESS

At the height of the Cold War, the United States possessed 31,255 nuclear warheads, as shown on graph to the right. Following years of committed, persistent progress, our stockpile as of 2014 stood at 4,717 active and inactive warheads — a reduction of 85 percent. Additionally, from October 1993 through September 2014, the United States dismantled 10,251 nuclear warheads. In 2015, the United States reported that approximately 2,500 nuclear warheads are retired and awaiting dismantlement.

We continue to reduce the numbers and role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy. We are successfully implementing the New START Treaty with Russia that will reduce strategic nuclear forces to their lowest levels in more than fifty years. As of March 1, 2015, the United States had 1,597 deployed strategic warheads under the New START Treaty.

Decades ago the United States ended nuclear explosive testing and the production of fissile materials for use in nuclear weapons, and has removed 374 metric tons of highly enriched uranium and 61.5 metric tons of plutonium from use in nuclear weapons.



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TREATY REVIEW CONFERENCE

2015
NPT

Taken together, these removals account for enough nuclear material for more than 22,000 nuclear weapons. The United States has transformed its nuclear complex toward science-based stewardship of this shrinking stockpile and eliminated whole classes of nuclear weapons.

FUTURE REDUCTIONS

Against the backdrop of this historic progress, U.S. disarmament efforts continue. President Obama made clear in Berlin in 2013 that we can ensure the security of America and our allies while reducing our deployed strategic nuclear weapons by up to one-third below the level established in the New START Treaty. The United States stands ready to negotiate further cuts with Russia, and to work with our NATO allies to seek bold reductions in U.S. and Russian tactical weapons in Europe.



Photo courtesy of the National Nuclear Security Administration

Decades of efforts have taught us that there is no viable alternative to practical, responsible and verifiable step-by-step disarmament. There are no short cuts to lasting progress. The United States remains steadfast in its commitment to the NPT's disarmament pillar.

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